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Assistant Director, ORR

7 November 1950

THRU : Chief, Geographic Research, ORR  
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Evaluation of CIA/RR-G-15, The Soviet Arctic

1. This report provides a geographical appraisal of developments and activities in the Soviet Arctic. In the evaluation of these factors, particular attention was given to economic and military considerations including the current status and magnitude of Soviet efforts involved. In view of the limited intelligence available for the Soviet Arctic and of the increasing strategic importance of the region, the report should be of vital interest to persons in the intelligence community concerned with the economic and strategic potentials not only of the Soviet Arctic, but also of the entire Arctic Region.

2. Within the study four major aspects of the Soviet Arctic are emphasized: population and settlement characteristics, economic activities, transportation facilities, and the physical environment. Although each of these topics is treated systematically, all of them are evaluated in relation to the total potential of the Soviet Arctic. Such an analysis required an enormous amount of research based chiefly on finished and raw intelligence, including Russian language materials ranging from scattered newspaper reports to lengthy publications of specific subjects.

3. Throughout the report, the magnitude of the current Soviet effort to develop the Arctic emerges. All aspects of this program -- whether related to physical environment, settlement, transportation -- reveal the great significance attached to the Arctic by the Soviet Union.

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